

Assistance needed and received by refugees and migrants in Mexico

This snapshot offers an analysis on assistance needed and received by refugees and migrants in Mexico. It aims to contribute towards a solid evidence base to inform targeted responses on the ground, as well as advocacy efforts related to the situation of refugees and migrants in the country.

The snapshot presents an analysis of reported needs according to time spent in the country. Results shown in this snapshot are indicative: sample composition varied somewhat for each period and has not been weighted and may therefore account for some of the differences in findings.

Highlights

- **83% of all respondents reported needing assistance but less than half of all respondents stated having received assistance during their migration journey.**
- **Needs are highest** among respondents who had been in Mexico **for less than 3 months** at the time of the interview.
- Cash, food and water were the most common needs among respondents; but **legal assistance becomes the most frequent need for those in Mexico for more than 6 months**

Profiles

The analysis is based on 918 surveys conducted in Mexico between February and October 2021, partially by face-to-face interview (97%) and partially by phone (3%). 68% of the surveys were carried out in Tapachula, 31% in Tijuana.¹

62% of respondents were men and 38% were women. 37% of the respondents were in the 18 to 25 and 37% in the 26 to 35 years age range. The average age of the sample was 30 years (see Table 1).

63% of respondents came from Honduras, 23% from El Salvador, 10% from Guatemala, 3% from Nicaragua, and 1% from Venezuela.

Table 1. Age ranges and sex by length of stay in the country of interview

		1 month	2 to 3 months	3 to 6 months	6 months to 2 year	Total
Sex	Women	30%	41%	42%	36%	38%
	Men	70%	59%	58%	64%	62%
Age ranges	18-25	40%	41%	31%	29%	37%
	26-35	36%	35%	43%	37%	37%
	36-45	18%	19%	18%	20%	19%
	46-55	4%	5%	6%	10%	6%
	> 55	1%	1%	2%	4%	2%
N	Total (freq)	202	388	188	140	918

¹ 4Mi enumerators in Mexico were located in Tapachula and Tijuana. Data collection began later in Tijuana (end of April 2021) meaning that data from this location is more limited.

Refugees and migrants arrived in Mexico with very high needs

Does the assistance received and needed changed, depending on the time spent in Mexico?

Most respondents reported needing assistance (83% of all respondents, 764/918). Needs of assistance were more common for respondents who had been in Mexico for less than 3 months (see Figure 1 for details). Less than half of all respondents (44%, 408/918) stated having received assistance during their migration journey. According to 4Mi enumerators, the higher level of need reported by new arrivals in Mexico could be explained by the low level of funding with which they began the journey: 52% of all respondents declared that the money they had was not enough (468/895). Respondents were also exposed to abuses, which drained their economic resources: 36% of all respondents reported that they had been robbed and 35% had to pay bribes or suffered extortion during their journey.

The longer a respondent has been in Mexico, the more likely they are to have received assistance, and the less often they report needing assistance. 60% of respondents in Mexico for 6 months to 2 years reported having received assistance (84/140).

Cash remains the most common need; need of legal assistance increases over time

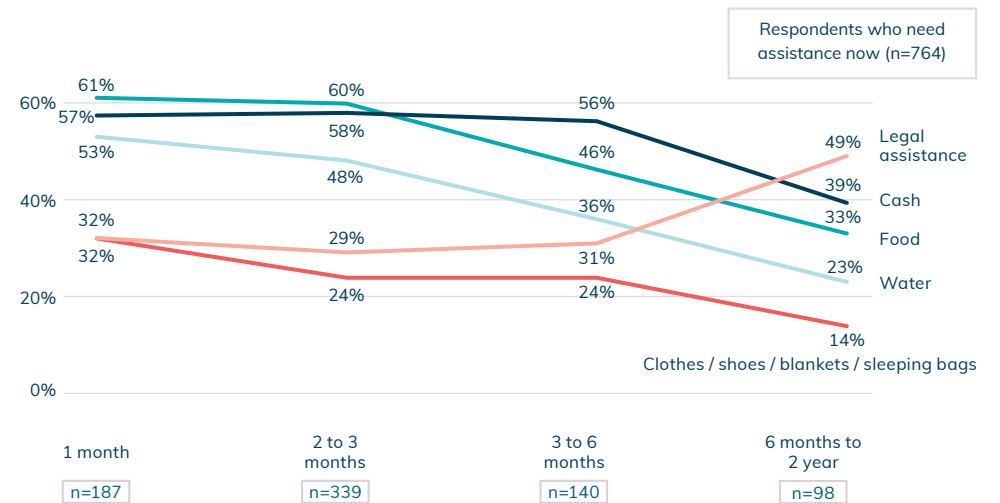
Cash was most often needed (by 55% of respondents who reported needing assistance, 418/764). Fewer needed cash among those who had been in the country for 6 months to 2 years.² According to 4Mi enumerators, the need for cash assistances decreases as refugees and migrants find opportunities to generate income in Mexico.

Needs for basic assistance, despite being frequently reported, also fall over time spent in Mexico: 61% of respondents in Mexico for one month or less reported needing food assistance, 33% for respondents in Mexico for 6 months or more.

² Significant differences identified throughout this analysis were found through z-tests at the 0.05 level of significance.

Legal assistance, in contrast, is an increasing need, from being mentioned as a need by 32% of respondents in Mexico for 1 month to 49% of respondents in Mexico for 6 months or more. According to 4Mi enumerators, respondents who have been in Mexico for longer more often want to regularize their status in the country (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Types of assistance needed and the length of stay

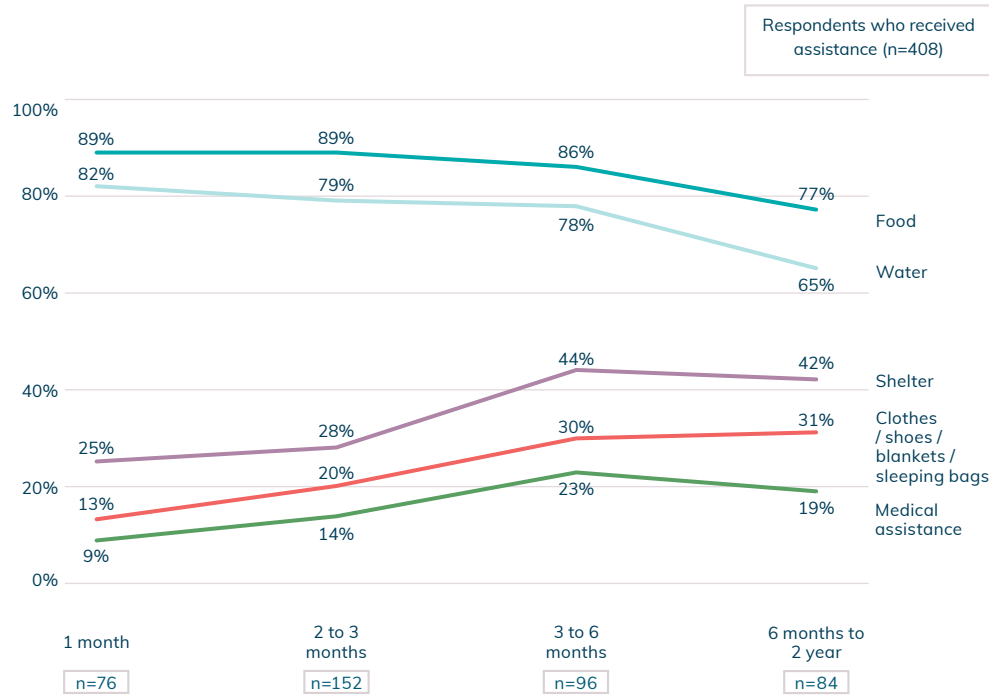


Note: Respondents may select more than one answer to this question; 11 options were omitted with averages less than 39%.

Basic needs assistance is the main received

The main type of assistance received by all surveyed refugees and migrants has been to cover basic needs such as food, water and shelter. Despite cash and legal assistance being common needs (by 55% and 33% of respondents who stated they needed assistance, respectively), they were received by a very small proportion of respondents (14% and 13% of respondents who received assistance, respectively).

Figure 2. Types of assistance received and the length of stay



Note: Respondents may select more than one answer to this question; 10 options were omitted with averages less than 26%.

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4Mi data collection

[4Mi](#) is the Mixed Migration Centre's flagship primary data collection system, an innovative approach that helps fill knowledge gaps, and inform policy and response regarding the nature of mixed migratory movements and the protection risks for refugees and migrants on the move. 4Mi field enumerators are currently collecting data through direct interviews with refugees and migrants in West Africa, East Africa, North Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe.

Note that the sampling approach means that the findings derived from the surveyed sample provide rich insights, but the figures cannot be used to make inferences about the total population. See more 4Mi analysis and details on methodology at www.mixedmigration.org/4mi

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